

CITATION AND PRESENTATION
OF THE
ACADEMY MEDAL*
TO
ALPHONSE RAYMOND DOCHEZ, M.D.

ROBERT L. LEVY

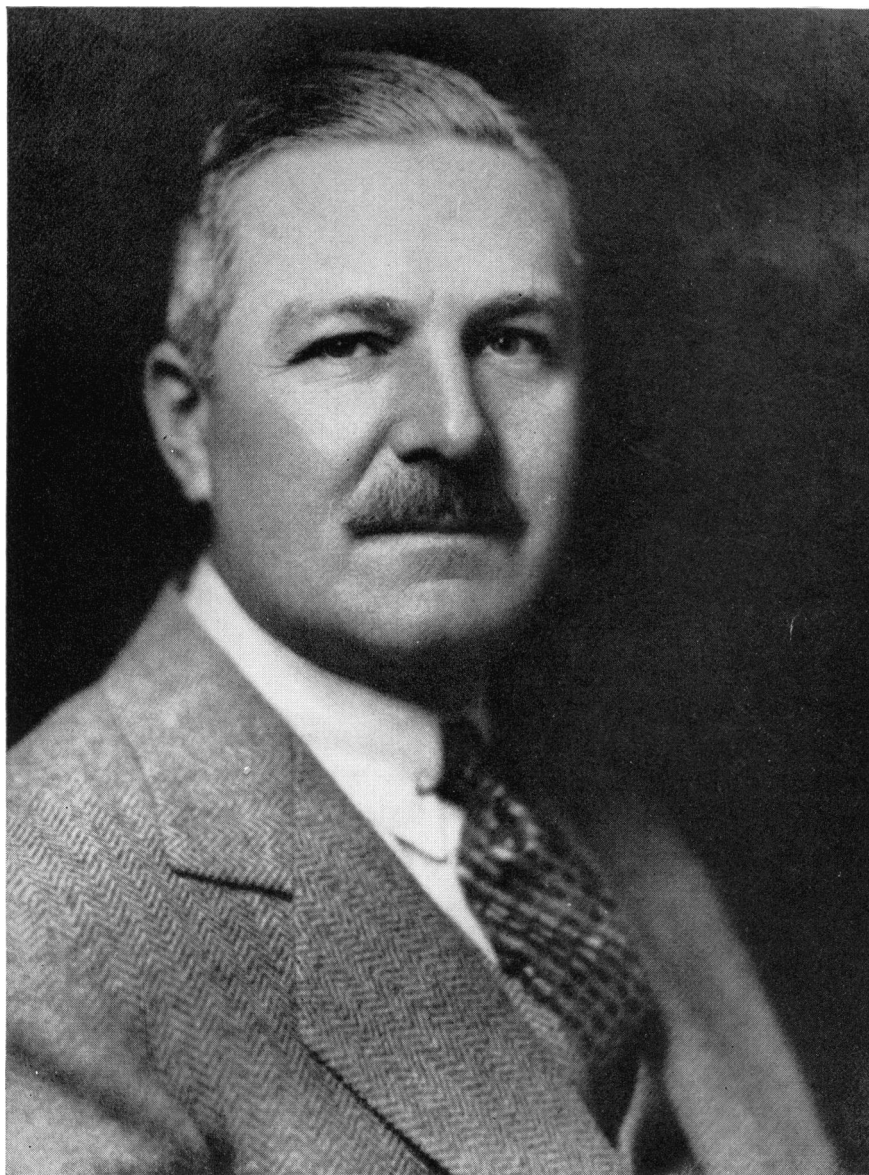
President, The New York Academy of Medicine

THE Academy Medal, for which an endowment was provided in 1928 by Dr. Samuel McCullach, is awarded, at the discretion of the Council, for distinguished service in medicine. The recipient this evening, Dr. Alphonse R. Dochez, is the eleventh physician to be so chosen in the course of twenty-eight years.

There have been many evidences of the esteem in which Dr. Dochez is held by his colleagues. Among the honors bestowed upon him was the Kober Medal of the Association of American Physicians, in 1949. The presentation was made by his close friend and co-worker for forty years, Dr. Oswald T. Avery who, in the course of his remarks, had this to say: "What Dr. Dochez has done is well known; but how he did it is less easy to define. The results of his work have not only theoretical value but have found direct application in clinical teaching and medical practice." These few words indicate the wide scope of Dr. Dochez's influence.

Shortly after graduation from the Johns Hopkins Medical School he was appointed to the staff of the Rockefeller Institute, where he spent eleven years. Here, with Gillespie he established the biological classification of pneumococci into specific types. He developed methods and techniques for the production and clinical use of anti-pneumococcus serum, at that time the only known form of specific therapy for lobar pneumonia. His work laid the foundation upon which rests knowl-

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edge subsequently developed concerning the immunochemistry of the pneumococcus.

During World War I, Dr. Dochez served, with the rank of Major in the Medical Corps of the United States Army, as a member of a committee appointed by the Surgeon General to study epidemics of acute respiratory disease due to hemolytic streptococci. The results of these observations showed that a majority of the strains investigated comprised six serological types. This demonstration furnished the basis for later studies of streptococcal diseases and their sequelae.

In the fall of 1919, Dr. Dochez returned to Baltimore as Associate Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University. Here he initiated his studies of scarlet fever, which were continued when, two years later, he moved to New York with Dr. Walter W. Palmer, to establish the first full-time Department of Medicine at Columbia University. Together with the Dicks, Dochez may be credited with establishing the hemolytic streptococcus as the cause of scarlet fever.

The problem to which Dr. Dochez next devoted several years was the etiology of the common cold. With his associates, he succeeded in isolating a virus from the nasal washings of patients which caused, in chimpanzees, the characteristic symptoms of a spontaneous cold in man. These results, with their implications, have since been confirmed and extended.

Officially, Dr. Dochez is now retired. But he still visits the hospital and laboratory, where his wise counsel is always available and frequently sought.

Those who have known Dr. Dochez most intimately have been impressed by the absence of hurry in all of his activities. His investigations have been characterized by thoughtful planning, meticulous care in their execution and critical appraisal of their significance. Again, in the words of Dr. Avery, he never engaged in "purposeless rivalries or competitive research".

I cannot resist injecting one short personal note into these remarks. In February, 1919, I began service as Resident Physician at the Hospital of the Rockefeller Institute. On the first morning, Dr. Rufus Cole, the Director and my new chief, took me on a visit to the wards and laboratories. The tour ended in the doctors' lounge. There, on a couch, with eyes closed and hands clasped across the chest, lay a quiet figure, apparently asleep. This picture of Dr. Dochez is one which I

have never forgotten. For I was to learn that physical inactivity could mask creative thinking in one whose mind was tireless in its search for new scientific truths.

In one of his lectures on "Heroes and Hero-Worship", Thomas Carlyle wrote: "I should say *sincerity*, a deep great, genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic. . . . A little man may have this, it is competent to all men that God has made: but a Great Man cannot be without it."

Dr. Dochez, you are one of our Great Men in Medicine. You have made outstanding, fundamental contributions. You have stimulated and encouraged students and colleagues, not only as a scientist but as one who, by example, has embodied honesty of purpose. For all of these reasons, the Academy takes pride in paying tribute. I feel privileged, as President, to present to you this Medal as a symbol of our affectionate regard.